Scottish anarchist network

As We See It

CAPITALISM

Under the present system we have no real say in the decisions that affect us, our communities or workplaces. Instead a minority has this power. This due to their ownership and control of social wealth and the means to create it. In Scotland, 7% of the population own 84% of the wealth. It's the interests of this elite that must be satisfied within "democracy", otherwise there is no investment, no production and no work. This is true for the rest of the capitalist world as it is for the few remaining "Communist" Party regimes.

ECONOMICALLY, capitalism results in power and privilege for the few, sacrifices and alienation for the rest of us. Continually we see the world we live in being destroyed, standardised and packaged so that this elite can make a few more pounds. Capitalism has turned every feeling and desire we have into an object to be bought and sold. Humanity and community have been replaced by price tags and commercials.

POLITICALLY, we live in a highly centralised state, over which we have little meaningful control. Every five years we get the chance to vote for a politician, a puppet for faceless bureaucrats and big business. A cross on a bit of paper for a state which treats us like children, telling us what we can and cannot do. A state that claims to know what's best for us regardless of what we actually think or want and which uses OUR money to subsidise capitalist firms and control us. A state that sends us to fight its wars for more power against its competing rivals. A state which increasingly grants itself more repressive powers in order to control dissent.

Not all working class people are oppressed in the same way. Black people are subjected to systematic racism from the state, from fascists and from individual racists. Women are oppressed by a system of attitudes, ways of living and institutions based on their domination by men. Lesbians and gay men suffer from bigotry and repressive laws. All such restrictive roles repress all involved.

Discrimination and hierarchical and authoritarian relationships exist throughout society and must be resisted. These social oppressions are only useful to our rulers, as they divide us, getting us to blame other working class people for the problems we all face. They divert our anger away from the system and those who run it.

Every individual, group or people has the right to be itself and to self-determination. But capitalism results in the standardisation of cultures. Individuality, cultural diversity nor popular self-determination can withstand market forces, the power of multi-national companies or the conformity created by state centralisation.

We are against all forms of imperialism, where one country imposes its wishes and values upon another by economic or political means. Such domination can only be resisted by class struggle, not nationalism. Nationalism, like all cross class movements, means only a change in rulers. There are no common interests between the classes. Our lives will be no better under Scottish bosses and politicians. We can only be free in a free world, a world without capitalism and states.

RESISTANCE

Meaningful change can only happen when ordinary people struggle together to resist power. In countries like Scotland, the vast majority who are excluded from power are the working class. This includes white and blue collar workers, workers in the service industry, the unemployed and other claimants and people doing domestic work at home.

These struggles take many forms, such as resistance to wage cuts, poverty, sexism, racism, ecological destruction, militarism and so forth. They are fought throughout society, in workplaces, in communities, in the health service, in benefit offices, in prisons.

We in the **Scottish anarchist network** *(*name changed from the* ex-*Scottish Federation of Anarchists on 30th August 1997)* are involved in such struggles and aim to encourage tendencies in this resistance towards

- Self-organisation and equality, with people controlling their own struggles and organisations, rather than dependence on and control by leaders.

- Collective direct action, rather than ineffectual lobbying or letter writing.

- Combining workplace and community struggles and organisation rather than their division into different "single-issue" campaigns.

- The revolution of everyday life, not the poverty of consumerism or the boredom of left-wing politics.

- Changing the fundamental aspects of capitalism, rather than tinkering with minor changes.

- Revolution, not reformism, the working class and ruling class have nothing in common.

Struggles must be controlled by meetings of all those involved, with elected committees to carry out day to day tasks. Anyone elected to such a position of responsibility must carry out the wishes of the meetings or be answerable to those involved and subject to instant recall. Alternative forms of organisation must be created.

Resistance should be spread, with links created to workplaces and the community. Such links must be of a federal nature, with power resting firmly at the bottom in the hands of those involved. By organising in this manner we ensure that there is active participation in activity and decision making by all involved. Any organisation not based on these principles, such as the trade unions, are part of the problem.

We reject the dead end of electioneering. We must organise and fight where we have real power, in our communities and workplaces. From there we can impose by direct action that which politicians can never get in Parliament. Only this can create the spirit of revolt needed to resist oppression and get improvements in the here and now, as well as creating a new world.

REVOLUTION

THIS new world is not for the distant future. It exists now, in our hearts. By organising ourselves, using direct action and showing solidarity we create the ideas and structures of this new world within the present one. Only this will allow us to organise as a class and take-over our workplaces and communities, so winning the class war. Without this take-over we will struggle within the system, but never replace it.

A FREE SOCIETY can only be created and run from below, by and for everyone. No political party acting or seizing power on our behalf can do it for us. We reject the "would-be" rulers of left-wing parties and their politics. A free society can never come through Parliament or any other state. Parliament is organised to protect privilege and oppression, it cannot be reformed. States, by their structure and internal workings, create bureaucracy, with its own interests, power and privileges. They can never be used to abolish inequality and injustice.

THE NEW SOCIETY

Society can be organised in a better way, one that meets the needs of all and the environment. This society is anarchy (or libertarian communism/socialism).

Anarchism comes from our needs and desires for freedom, equality and solidarity. It is the means by which we, the working class, can win the class war and create the sort of world we want and need.

Anarchism is based on the free federation of autonomous groups, directly controlled from the bottom up by their members. In an anarchist society, self-management replaces government and bosses. This decentralisation ensures that we take control of our own fates, without leaders and led.

• Our goal is the creation of a • global community where

• The world's resources are held in common and shared.

• People manage their own lives, work and communities.

• All have an equal say in decision making through decentralised forms of organisation.

• Relationships in all areas of life are based on liberty, equality and mutual respect, regardless of gender, age, colour, sexual orientation, disability or culture.

• People live in harmony with nature.

• Work no longer consists of boring and repetitive tasks but instead becomes a mean of self-expression and fulfilment.

Contact Box A, *Fahrenheit*,33 Virginia St.,Glasgow G1.
or A.C.E.,17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7.

We encourage and assist resistance to all oppression. This includes economic and environmental exploitation and all forms of state and social oppression, such as racism and sexism.

Mass direct action is the most effective and liberating form of struggle.

Our aim is for mass struggles to develop into a revolutionary transformation, in which people seize control of the world's resources and fundamentally re-organise society.

This can only be achieved by the self-organisation of the vast majority, the working class. We oppose all hierarchies and political parties.

We want a free, stateless world, with social wealth owned and controlled by society. Production will be to meet human need and all relationships based on equality and mutual respect.

T/SOR/49/2/14

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST NETWORK MAILING, 31 OCT 1997

from ACE - **Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh**, 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA. 0131 557 6242. **Glasgow anarchists**, Box A, c/o Farenheit 451, Virginia Galleries, Virginia Street, Glasgow G1. 0141 353 2199 or 0141 552 5519. pager 0336 754257. E mail anarcho@geocities.com

Scottish anarchist network news-sheet - contributions invited. Deadline mid Nov.

Scottish anarchist network get-together. Coffee/ tea from 11am, starting 12 noon sharp, Sat 22 November at ACE, 17 W.Montgomery Place, Edinburgh. Details 0131 557 6242. Followed by ACE benefit gig with the legendary Archbishop Kebab at Tap o' Lauriston

Annual anti racist march. Sat 29 November, Glasgow. S@ne presence, with distribution of news-sheet. Followed, hopefully, by anarchist-organised anti racist gig. Provisionally 6-10pm at Kinning Park complex (Kinning Pk U/ground) Confirm with Glasgow nos above.

SANE NEWS-SHEET

The Scottish anarchist conference in Glasgow on 30.8.97 agreed to publish a Scottish-wide news-sheet on a regular basis. We are bringing an issue out in time to give out copies at the annual Scottish anti racist march in Glasgow on 29 November.

So we need contributions, the earlier the better, deadline around mid november. We especially request people from beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow to send in news, short newsy articles of 40-100 words are just as valuable as longer ones. Write Edinburgh or Glasgow addresses .

SANE GET TOGETHER 22 NOVEMBER AT ACE, EDINBURGH

The ACE premises are at 17 W. Montgomery Place, on the junction with Brunswick Rd.. If coming from city centre go down Leith Walk, then right at Montgomery St., then left at W. Montgomery Place. 15 mins walk from bus or train station (Waverley).
some ideas for provisional agenda

- Anti racist march Glasgow 29 Nov.
- S@ne news-sheet (and any other publicity, eg leaflets)
- Local reports including founding of Solidarity Group in Glasgow
- Current struggles - Education : tuition fees and grants, anti Project Work and Welfare to Work, and others
- Proposal for working groups on particular subjects
- Discussion on ways of organising : are local solidarity groups a way forward?
- Next/ future meetings - venue, date, format etc.

and poss a discussion on either *resistance to patriarchy/ women organising*, or *social ecology*.
Ring 0131 557 6242 to add items to agenda or if you need overnight accomodation. If you need a creche space please ring as early as possible as there is only one useable room in our premises and we will have to sort out a creche somewhere else nearby (though there is a kids playground next door).
The ACE benefit gig starts around 9pm, finishes about 1am and is free. The Tap O'Lauriston is on Lauriston Place, near Tollcross, 10 minutes walk from West End of Princes St..

BRIEF REPORT ON SCOTTISH @ GET TOGETHER, GLASGOW 30.8.97

23 present. Glasgow 14, Edinburgh 3, Central Region 3, Fife 1, Dundee 1, Dumfries 1. Women 4, men 19.

Decisions made

A) Change name to SCOTTISH ANARCHIST NETWORK (SANE!)
B) Produce a regular Scotland-wide news-sheet (Edinburgh co-ordinator Em)
C) Have regular meetings at Scottish level, approx every 4 months, rotated between different areas. Next meeting Edinburgh 22 Nov..
D) Maintain regular contact between different areas, facilitated by the following co-ordinators : Glasgow - Iain. Dundee - Dave. Edinburgh - Micah.
There was also a proposal for working groups on particular subject areas, eg prisoners, ideas, solidarity groups/ dockers etc, Treason/ culture, international.

PTO

Scottish @ meeting report continued....

Discussions -

1 Talk and discussion on Scottish Anarchism - the last 10 years.

(notes on talk hopefully included, if not, available from Glasgow). Too lengthy/difficult to reproduce the whole debate, but following gives an idea of the areas covered - all views expressed those of individuals.

The question of @'s relationship to the new Militant and Scottish socialist Alliance - very few women involved in Scot@, despite initiatives like Tantrum in Glasgow - significance of new global networks inspired by the Zapatistas - in Britain Reclaim the Streets and the L/pool dockers struggles stand out - attention paid to green struggles is a reflection of the general lack of struggle. Green issues don't interest most people. The working class doesn't exist any more - The working class has changed, but still exists. Class society still exists - capitalism has changed, we have to take account of the new industries - shouldn't look on green struggles as single issues, Reclaim the Streets have linked up with the L/pool dockers - should look at issues like Parks Dept workers suffering ill-health due to spraying harmful pesticides etc - debate on green politics and class - limiting to talk only about class struggle, need to talk about social struggles - resisting racism/ imperialism and sexism/ patriarchy is equally important as resisting the economic exploitation of capitalism - many people in the @ movement have come from alternative music, animal rights etc backgrounds, they shouldn't reject the way they came to @ - a poss way forward : Murray Bookchin's idea of the active citizen, eg Workers City in Glasgow, the anti poll tax movement - The difference between revolutionaries and others is that we have an analysis of the world. The next step is to change things. We must organise collectively, that is the basis of everything. We should be involved in current struggles, eg in Glasgow at present community centres are being occupied in Pollok and Easterhouse. - We need a strategy and a programme. We need to be clearer. - We should be involved in struggles of course, but sometimes things just come out of the blue, like May 68 in France - it's useful for us to come together like today, especially for those of us who are in smaller places where we can feel isolated - We need a modern analysis, not relying on old @ figures, many of whom had dubious ideas. theory is important in struggle. we should avoid the leftist fault of exaggerating the things that are being done by the government - in Sweden @'s pay a lot of attention to building solidarity within the group, this is important - a good activity is the occupation of self-managed community centres, like ACE.

2) Scottish Anarchism - the next 10 years.

This talk covered : How to network. What struggles to get involved in. How to attract and keep people. How to sustain momentum and build upon success. Reps of current struggles reporting on their experiences. How to build a Scottish network which will last. The need for a long term strategy. How to achieve a presence and make an impact. (Sorry we haven't got a fuller account of this section)

3) Report on the Encuentro in the Spanish state in summer 1997. 2 comrades had made the sacrifice to leave the dear green place and make the arduous journey to sun-ravaged Iberia to attend this international meeting. This was the 2nd Encuentro, the 1st had been in Chiapas, inspired by Zapatista revolt.

There were 2,500 - 4,000 people there (about 1,000 from Italy!), including people from the Landless Peasants Movement in Brazil, and the meetings took place in 6 locations.

Main themes : * neo liberalism and economics * against globalisation : our worlds and their worlds * struggles for culture * struggle against patriarchy * ecology * against exclusion * world without borders

A major theme throughout was creating a network of struggles. A database of addresses is being drawn up, and our comrades brought back loads of addresses. Info on the Encuentro available on the internet on the Workers Solidarity Movement site. Aim is to have an annual Encuentro, next year hopefully in north Africa.

An anarchist camp has been set up in Chiapas, should we be supporting it? (support also needed by anarchist social centres in Moscow and Belarus)

4) MOVING FORWARD

Proposal to set up solidarity groups in different neighbourhoods of cities like Glasgow, with local broadsheets. Should avoid the centralisation that happened with the Solidarity Centre. Positive experience of the Ateneo's (anarchist social centres) in Barcelona, organised on a local level (tho' we would not have resources to have local centres right away, we would start with solidarity groups). It would still be necessary to have a wider Clydeside/ Edinburgh/ whatever group as well.

Another proposal that affinity groups based on interests should precede geographical based groups.

View put forward that "the citizen" rather than "the worker' was now taking on the active participatory role in history. - View that we should not be obsessed with struggles, but should communicate with people's concerns over the creeping barbarism in everyday life. We need to engender the idea of community, through propaganda and communication on an individual basis. - Description of the experience of the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, including claimants' group activity, pub nights at premises, info shop, public meetings on particular themes. However despite some successes numbers involved had not grown as much as hoped for.

Other events - Faslane eviction court case demo 9.30/10am 5 Nov Dumbarton Sheriff Court. info 01436 820901 • ACE benefit 4 Dec at Bongo Club, New St : Dominic Waxing Lyrical & Badgewearer.